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KENNEDY REMEMBERED

Cuba and Consequences

Richard Helms, 70, was the CIA's deputy director for operations under Kennedy and its director under Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon. He is now a consultant in Washington.

I do recall. I was sitting at lunch at the agency with John McCone, who was then director, and two or three other senior officers of CIA, when suddenly Mr. McCone's aide came through the door and said that the president had been shot. And I realized very quickly that my responsibility was to get the lines out as rapidly as possible to see if there was anything else going on anywhere else in the world. Could this be part of a conspiracy? A concerted attack on the United States or its leadership? It became manifest within 24 or 48 hours that this was not the case, but in the early hours, one had no way of knowing.

The assassination catapulted him immediately into a kind of pantheon because of the way he died. I found both John Kennedy and Bob Kennedy men of integrity, strongly patriotic, tough-minded in the area of foreign policy, prepared to stand up to their responsibilities. But a lot of the sheen that's implied in the word "Camelot" has come off the administration since. By the time he was assassinated, his

programs in Congress were in terrible trouble. He was one of those who inevitably got us deeper into the war in Vietnam; those who attempt to say that President Kennedy would never have gotten us into Vietnam the way President Johnson did have a very hard time, I think, supporting their claim. Pure presumption on their part. Pure assumption.

There are those who for some reason write that President Kennedy really didn't mind very much about the Cuban thing. Hell, he minded a great deal. He was *wild* with Castro, and the whole government was pushed hard to see if there wasn't some way to unseat him. The fact that the agency was not able to get the results was something that did not please him, and it didn't please his brother, either.

I'm also not quite sure why these advisers to President Kennedy are preening themselves over the remarkable job they did handling the missile crisis. I lived through that period here, and it was tense, God knows. But there had to be in the minds of that so-called



HELMs: 'NOT A GOLDEN MOMENT FOR FOREIGN POLICY'

ExCom, or Executive Committee, the knowledge that the United States' nuclear weapons far exceeded the strength of the Soviet Union, and that there was very little the Soviet Union could do to force itself through the quarantine.

Jack McCloy, who was then advising President Kennedy on disarmament, tells about sitting on a fence at his house up in Connecticut with Kuznetsov, the deputy foreign minister, arranging the withdrawal of the IL-28 bombers that were still there after the missiles had been removed. And Kuznetsov turns to him and says, "All right, Mr. McCloy, we will get the IL-28s out as we have taken the missiles out. But I want to tell you something, Mr. McCloy. The Soviet Union is

not going to find itself in a position like this ever again."

And it was at that point, as you look back, that the Russians started their big surge in strategic weapons. Various members of the Kennedy administration who stayed over into the Johnson administration never believed that the Soviets would go for a force that was larger than the U.S. had. And yet that's exactly what they've done. I'm not laying this at anybody's door. The events of life led there. But these fellows are patting themselves on the back for their statesmanlike handling of this situation, and I think if you look at it with a cold eye, you can say that this probably wasn't a golden moment for American foreign policy.

Lark for Art's Sake

By Sarah Booth Conroy

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The urge to rub eyes and look cautiously over your shoulder was universal last night at a Phillips Collection benefit. Guests came into Garfinckel's on F Street—and felt as though they had fallen down “Alice in Wonderland’s” rabbit hole.

Not all the thoughts were happy. Richard Helms, the former CIA head, talked a bit about the bombing of the Capitol. “You know our Congress has not been concerned about terrorism—on the theory that terrorism is what happens elsewhere. But this bombing could be more than an isolated act. A man named Brian Jenkins defined it best. He said, ‘Terrorism is violence aimed at the people watching.’ The bomb in the Capitol fits that description.”

EXCERPTED

4 November 1983

Top Suspect in Beirut Blast Emerges

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But Finding a Culprit Leaves Open Question: Should U.S. Retaliate?

By DAVID IGNATIUS
And GERALD F. SEIB

Staff Reporters of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON — Pictures of Hussein Moussavi show a small, neatly dressed man with a dark beard that seems to overwhelm his face. He is a school teacher by profession and a man with a family problem. Friends say that he was driven from his village in eastern Lebanon nearly a decade ago after he killed one of his cousins in a quarrel.

Mr. Moussavi is emerging as the prime suspect in an unusual intelligence dragnet.

U.S. officials say they are nearing a firm judgment that he and his extremist Shiite Moslem supporters planned the bomb attacks against U.S. and French soldiers in Beirut last month—probably with help from Iran and Syria.

A Reagan administration official summarizes the investigation of the bombings this way:

"There are intelligence estimates that identify Moussavi and his group as being associated with the attacks, with Iranian support and Syrian acquiescence."

If the U.S. reaches a firm conclusion that Mr. Moussavi and his supporters are the culprits, it will face an agonizing decision about whether to retaliate. President Reagan warned in a televised speech last week: "Those who directed this atrocity must be dealt justice, and they will be."

The Reagan administration this week remains committed to retaliation. But some policy makers question such tactics, suggesting that they could open the U.S. Marines to further terrorist acts and also complicate a solution to the Lebanon crisis.

The simplest retaliatory operation would be an attack against the headquarters of Mr. Moussavi's "Islamic Amal" faction in Baalbek, in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley. Some U.S. officials favor a commando raid against the headquarters, while others argue for an air strike. Officials suggest that the U.S. could hit the living quarters of Mr. Moussavi's group, in addition to their command

The Baalbek option has problems. A commando attack would require moving into territory controlled by Syrian troops. An air strike would risk hurting bystanders in a crowded urban area, one U.S. official notes. Moreover, an air strike could be dangerous for the U.S., since attacking planes would probably be vulnerable to Syria's extensive air-defense system, which is partly manned by Soviet troops. Finally, it isn't even certain that those responsible for last month's terrorist attacks have remained in the Baalbek area.

The Reagan administration also is considering diplomatic reprisals. For example, the U.S. may urge Lebanon to close the Iranian Embassy in Beirut, which

American officials believe was a meeting place for the terrorists. The U.S. might consider sanctions against Syria as well. But even these relatively mild diplomatic measures are blocked now by the Lebanese "national reconciliation" discussions in Geneva, Switzerland. The U.S. doesn't want to disrupt those talks, which offer the best hope for stabilizing Lebanon and getting American troops out.

An alternative to retaliation is negotiation of a security agreement with Syria that would protect American troops in Lebanon. The U.S. adopted this approach with the Palestine Liberation Organization in the 1970s, and it helped stop attacks against Americans in Beirut. The U.S. and Syria talked last week in Damascus about security problems, but there isn't any sign that Syria is ready to offer any solid cooperation.

Syria's role in the Lebanon crisis is crucial because it has the power to encourage—or forestall—terrorist raids. U.S. and Lebanese officials argue, for example, that it would have been difficult for Mr. Moussavi's Shiite group to gather and transport the explosives that killed at least 234 American and 56 French troops without the connivance of the Syrian armed forces and intelligence network in Lebanon.

"It's naive to imagine that anything happens (in Syrian-controlled parts of Lebanon) without the Syrians," explains a Lebanese source. Adds Richard Helms, a one-time ambassador to Iran and Central Intelligence Agency director, "You don't get trucks and 2,000 pounds of dynamite from the local drugstore."

Syria, Iran and Mr. Moussavi have all denied responsibility for the bombings. But all three have gloated about the carnage. **Gathering Clues**

In its investigation, the U.S. is drawing on a range of sources. The U.S. has covert contacts in some Lebanese factions; these are supplemented by the much broader network of the Lebanese Deuxieme Bureau, the intelligence unit of the Lebanese government. The U.S. also studies intelligence reports from friendly countries, such as

France, Britain, Israel, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. In addition to these human sources, the U.S. has various forms of technical surveillance. The array of information is being analyzed now in a final "all sources" intelligence effort.

The case against Mr. Moussavi and his pro-Iranian supporters isn't yet conclusive, partly because of the difficulty in gathering reliable information in Lebanon. U.S. officials cite three sorts of evidence:

—Analysis of the method of operation. The fact that the attacks were suicide missions suggests that the drivers of the bomb-laden trucks were extremist Shiite Moslems, who believe that by dying in a holy cause they will gain a place in heaven. The fact that French troops were hit—at a time when Iran is furious at France for selling sophisticated jets to Iraq—suggests that the attackers were pro-Iranian. Thus, suspicion immediately falls on Mr. Moussavi, the most extreme pro-Iranian Shiite leader in Lebanon.

—Surveillance. At about 6:32 on the morning of the attacks, roughly 10 minutes after the bombs exploded, a group of men was seen leaving the Iranian embassy in Beirut and driving off at high speed. Their flight indicates that the Iranian embassy may have known about or helped coordinate the bombings. U.S. officials also suspect that the Iranian embassy may have been a contact point for Mr. Moussavi's followers in Beirut.

—Agents' reports. In recent weeks, U.S. intelligence had picked up rumors that there would be a "spectacular attack" by pro-Iranian Shiites against "the godless Americans and French." Last week, as the U.S. and its friends pumped for information, intelligence contacts in Lebanon repeatedly named Mr. Moussavi as the man behind the attacks. "People who are sources of various intelligence services are saying that Moussavi did it," says one official.

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